

**RALEIGH TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MAY 12, 2011
MINUTES**

The Raleigh Transit Authority met on Thursday, May 12, 2011 at 3:30 p.m., in the Council Chamber, Avery C. Upchurch Government Complex, Raleigh, NC with the following members present:

Chairman Joseph Springer, presiding
Jeff Bandini
Roger Kosak
Craig Ralph
Les Seitz
Jane Thurman
Uel Whitsett

Others present: David Eatman and Scott McClellan

Chairman Springer called the meeting to order with discussion and actions taken as shown:

NEW MEMBER – JANE THURMAN – INTRODUCED

Mr. Eatman introduced new Authority member, Jane Thurman. He indicated this would be an excellent opportunity to schedule a work session for Authority members to review major projects, where we are, where the Authority has been, regional projects, responsibilities of the board, etc. He indicated staff would be preparing information on this and open it up to any members desiring to attend.

AGENDA – APPROVED AS AMENDED

Mr. Eatman he would be reporting on various items under staff updates. Without objection, the agenda was approved with these amendments.

RECOGNITION – CHARLES MALONE – RESOLUTION PRESENTED

Mr. Eatman recognized Charles Malone noting his term on the Authority has expired. He presented Mr. Malone with a Resolution of Appreciation and a plaque recognizing his four years of service on the Authority. Mr. Malone stated it has been an honor to serve on this Authority. He urged remaining members to keep up the good work and complimented staff for the work they do.

MINUTES – APRIL 14, 2011 – APPROVED AS PRESENTED

Members had received prior to the meeting copies of the April 14, 2011 minutes. Mr. Ralph moved approval of the minutes as presented. His motion was seconded by Mr. Kosak, unanimously passed. Chairman Springer ruled the motion adopted.

2035 TRANSIT PLAN UPDATE – RECEIVED AS INFORMATION

Mr. Eatman introduced Robert Bush who would provide the update on the Wake County 2035 Transit Plan. Mr. Eatman explained this plan has been under development for some time. He noted this type of plan has not been developed in a long time and looks at transit service on a county wide or regional wide basis. Recommendations were presented on the Analysis Study and they are now wrapping that up from a project implementation standpoint and it is now going into the education phase. He explained this phase educates 12 municipalities in Wake County including mayors, staff, etc. about the implementation of the plan and their impacts. Mr. Eatman indicated if, in the future, we move forward with the ½ cent sales tax referendum for transit in Wake County, the support of all 12 municipalities in Wake County will be needed since this tax would cover the full county. During the education process, work will be going forward with Triangle Transit to determine the elements we could afford to move forward with in 2035. Certain financial bench marks have to be met for the Feds to move forward with a project. He indicated this update was being made to assure the Authority is up to speed.

Mr. Eatman explained Mr. Bush has been meeting every Tuesday with CAMPO representatives. He stated as this is wrapped up, staff will move into the CAT short range plan. That plan will not ignore this plan but will depend on further refining service we would recommend for the City of Raleigh over the next three years or so. He urged members to contact staff with any questions. He noted the Executive Summary package should be developed around the 1st of June.

Mr. Bush reviewed the plan in detail noting it is a County plan, not just a City of Raleigh plan. An important aspect is they are recommending extending service to all jurisdictions in the County. Any tax referendum will require approval of the entire County. He noted this is a broad based geographic plan. It is a realistic plan but there will be real challenges for elected officials and will have really tough financial choices between costs for bus elements and rail elements. He noted we may or may not be able to afford the items shown in this report. He provided members with a handout outlining his presentation and explained they have worked hand in hand with people working on the rail plan to be sure they work seamlessly with one another.

Mr. Eatman spoke to ITS deployment which would allow receiving information relating to bus locations, provide information to cell phones, etc. He could not provide dates for

this being available but would work toward a goal of getting this ready. Mr. Eatman also noted the new maintenance facility will accommodate growth into 2035 and will need to expand maintenance for the western part of the County. He further noted there are ongoing discussions relating to where the Bus on Shoulders program (BOS) might lead noting NCDOT has recognized this as feasible. He explained the biggest opportunity for BOS for our region would be outside the City of Raleigh in the 40 corridor, mainly in Durham County in the afternoon. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) was reviewed with Mr. Bush noting the recommendation is not constructing new lanes but using existing corridors which would be less expensive to implement. Stakeholder and public input was reviewed. Mr. Bush explained there will be service to every municipality but not to every corner of the County if the density is not there to support transit. Maps showing potential future Wake Commuter Bus Service, potential future Wake Local Service, potential Western Wake Local Bus Service, premium transit corridors, etc. were presented and reviewed in detail. Next steps for the Long Range Plan were reviewed with Mr. Bush explaining the need to merge the bus and rail elements together into a comprehensive plan that could ultimately be taken before the voters for a sales tax referendum. He reported he would be meeting with the Wake County Mayors Association next week to provide this information to them. He will then go before the Wake County Commissioners who must adopt the plan and take it before the voters in 2012. Durham and Orange Counties are moving more aggressively toward their plan and are going to referendum this year but all will ultimately be working together. Next steps for the Short Range Plan were outlined with Mr. Bush explaining there will be workshops where the general public will see this information. He noted four workshops will be held beginning in early June. Mr. Bush stated he hoped Authority members would attend as many of these workshops as possible. Modifications will be provided at another presentation to this Authority at the end of summer. He indicated the key caveat for any plan is funding. He spoke to the need to identify if there is anything that can be done within existing finances.

Mr. Kosak recommended reviewing parking spaces provided at consolidation spots. Mr. Eatman indicated ultimately the Authority should endorse the 2035 Plan and at the same time this information will go through the MPO.

This report was received as information.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – RECEIVED

Graham Oliver spoke to the need to get behind Wake County and get them to approve the local options sales tax for public transit. Orange and Durham Counties have approved it and if Wake County does not, it will put Wake County behind the curve on Public Transit as part of the light rail system. He stated he hoped public transit will be provided to Fuquay-Varina and other parts of Wake County which would be an alternative to paying the tolls for completion of I-540.

PASSENGER AMENITY STUDY – RECEIVED AS INFORMATION

Mr. Eatman provided a presentation of the Passenger Amenity Study noting this was discussed at the previous meeting with a full version available at this meeting. He explained he would like this adopted or considered by the Transit Authority for adoption or endorsement noting it would be subject to change at any time. Mr. Eatman reviewed the purpose of the study which develops design and placement criteria for transit stops and amenities noting the suggested standards meet or exceed requirements related to the Americans with Disabilities Act, other federal and state mandates and public safety requirements. Goals were reviewed that included promoting consistency, developing a bus stop and amenities program that meets the operational requirements of the existing and proposed fleet and encouraging new riders. The regulatory environment was reviewed including NCDOT right-of-way requirements, speed limit requirements in these areas, City of Raleigh right-of-way requirements and private easement acquisition requirements, all of which take time. Also explained by Mr. Eatman were bus stop placement criteria, design elements, private sector installations, etc.

Following the presentation, Mr. Eatman urged members to review the document and to feel free to contact staff with any questions. This will again be reviewed at an upcoming meeting. He noted staff is not seeking consultant help in development of this document.

The report was received as information.

CAPITAL AREA TRANSIT OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY UPDATE – RECEIVED

Mr. Eatman reported the ribbon cutting for the new facility will be at 2:00 p.m. on May 19, 2011 with an open house held the same morning from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. Staff will be available to conduct tours; however, every element of the facility will not be available for the public. Congressmen Price, Miller and Etheridge will be attending as well as FTA representatives. 300 people were invited to attend with 150-200 expected to attend.

The report was received as information.

STAFF REPORTS – RECEIVED

Mr. Eatman provided the following reports at the meeting:

1. Statement of Income and Loss (March 2011)
2. Operating Statistics (March 2011)
3. Evaluation by Route (March 2011)
4. Productivity by Route (March 2011)
5. Variance Analysis (March 2011)
6. Go PASS Ridership Summary

Mr. Eatman reported ridership is up and we are looking at a 10% gain over the prior fiscal year. Ridership gains continue to increase without additional hours. RLine ridership has not spiked recently but ridership is steady and more and more people know it is available. During special events, RLine ridership spikes.

The reports were received as information.

CONCLUDING REMARKS – RECEIVED

Mr. Ralph spoke to the need to prevent skate boards around the transit facility Downtown. Mr. McClellan noted the security force works 8 hours per day and are not present all the time.

Mr. Kosak expressed appreciation for the placement of an Art-on-the-Move bus in North Raleigh. Mr. Kosak further referred to the Amenities Study noting it was an excellent report and was one reason he wanted to serve on the Transit Authority. He noted it would be good to get this study into the hands of various agencies in the City and the Mayor and City Council as soon as possible. He stated all need to know this is being done and being done right.

Mr. Bandini thanked staff for the presentations made at this meeting.

Ms. Thurman stated she looked forward to serving on the Authority.

Mr. Seitz explained one year ago the City Council commissioned the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Commission. Six months ago a Pedestrian Task Force was established and he was asked to serve with Mr. Ralph serving as an alternate member. This group was charged with coming up with a Pedestrian Plan for Raleigh. Mr. Seitz explained there are various opportunities for public input into this plan. There will also be an open house at Sertoma Arts Center on June 6, 2011 from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. There will also be advertisements placed in busses. There is also an online survey relating to places where people walk, improvements pedestrians would like to see, etc. They are also interested in transit connectivity.

STAFF REMARKS – RECEIVED

Mr. Eatman referred to Trailwood Hills bus routes noting this was referred to the Council's Public Works Committee. The previous Tuesday the Public Works Committee upheld the work the Transit Authority had done and maintained that route as developed. Staff provided a compelling report of the 13% - 17% ridership increase and the improved on time performance.

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Mr. Eatman reported FEMA has requested placement of placards in busses announcing locations for FEMA assistance for residents impacted by the tornado. FEMA will print the placards and staff will approve their locations.

Mr. Eatman reported the ART request for proposals was put out for the primary contractor and 10 proposals were received. Of those, 6 or 7 were being responsive to the request. Staff is working through evaluating the proposals. He noted it will be a critical element to "get our arms around the ARTS Program". Costs are continuing to escalate and we are finding ourselves with budget issues to keep up. Mr. Eatman indicated we are continuing to receive 30-40 new applicants monthly and individuals are using the program more and more.

CHAIRPERSON REMARKS – RECEIVED

Chairman Springer welcomed Ms. Thurman to the Authority. He thanked staff and the Authority members for the outstanding work being done.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Hunt